

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS



Newsletter of the N.H. Department of Environmental Services

September/October 2006

Governor's Message

First state-owned biodiesel station opens

State government is one of the largest users of energy in New Hampshire. With fuel prices at record levels, I believe we must lead by example in increasing our energy efficiency, both to save taxpayers' money and to reduce pollution.

That is why in July 2005, I signed Executive Order 2005-4 An Order for State Government to Lead-by-Example in Energy efficiency. This order included a directive for every state agency to implement a Clean Fleets Program, which includes reducing unnecessary idling, purchasing fuel efficient vehicles, and using alternative fuels whenever possible.



Governor Lynch

I am proud to announce that the New Hampshire Department of Transportation has done just that. On August 2, 2006, DOT, in collaboration with the University of New Hampshire, opened the first state-owned biodiesel pump. The pump is located at the current DOT station at the University of New Hampshire campus. The opening of the site marks the first use of biodiesel by DOT and UNH vehicles. Local communities and school districts will also have access to the

Governor, *continued on page 8*



Local transit buses are wearing a "clean air message" on their backs as part of a DES and DOT campaign to promote the use of public transportation in New Hampshire. A Concord Area Transit bus visited DES recently to show off the newly installed back "wrap." The bus wraps will remain on buses in Concord, Manchester, Nashua, and the Seacoast region for the next three months.

Commissioner's Column

Brownfields Program commended for 10 successful years

With New Hampshire being the fastest growing state in New England, sprawl continues to present challenges to our communities. One of the most effective ways to fight sprawl is to fully develop and utilize our existing downtowns and village centers. However, many of our town centers have been impacted by brownfields sites – abandoned or underutilized properties where redevelopment is complicated by concerns about environmental contamination. DES's Brownfields Program, which

celebrates its tenth anniversary this year, is working hard to meet the challenges posed by these sites and to revitalize our communities. The program helps communities to overcome the barriers to successful brownfields redevelopment. These barriers include uncertainty about site conditions, concerns about liability, unavailability of financing, and cleanups that are simply too expensive.

DES's Brownfields Program began in 1996, when the NH legislature

Commissioner, *continued on page 2*

Commissioner

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passed the Brownfields Covenant Program law, which addresses the important issue of liability for contami-



Sites such as the Claremont Mills have benefited from DES's comprehensive Brownfields Program.

nation. Since then, our Brownfields Program has evolved to include additional program elements to address each of the barriers to successful redevelopment. These include the Brownfields Assessment program,

which provides site assessment and cleanup planning services; the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, which provides low cost financing for brownfields cleanups; the Brownfields Cleanup Grant program, which provides grants to finance site cleanups; and the Brownfields Grantee Assistance program, which provides technical assistance to communities that receive federal Brownfields grants.

Building on sound legislation and supported by USEPA brownfields funding, DES's

Brownfields Program is a collaborative effort with our federal and local community partners. The Brownfields Program reflects a new model in environmental protection that is locally-based, forges strong public-private

partnerships and promotes innovation and creativity. This approach empowers communities to ensure that local solutions are created to solve local problems. EPA estimates that every acre of reclaimed brownfields saves four and a-half acres of greenspace and, on average, every greenspace has doubled the value of surrounding properties.

DES seeks to ensure that everyone enjoys the benefits of a healthy environment and better quality of life, and that no community or neighborhood bears a burden of environmental risks that may be detrimental to its health. We are helping to turn these eyesores into opportunities and bring new life to cities and towns — everything from new housing and new jobs to new shopping and new recreational facilities. As we celebrate our tenth anniversary, we look forward to continuing our work to revitalize New Hampshire's communities. For more information about the Brownfields Program in New Hampshire, go to www.des.nh.gov/BrownfieldsNH.

Michael Nolin
Commissioner



Brownfields 2006 Comes to Boston!

November 13-15 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center

Brownfields 2006 will feature nearly 100 educational sessions and a multitude of other learning opportunities, including an exhibit hall, poster presentations and mobile workshops. Nearly 5,000 professionals are anticipated to attend.

Registration is **free**, and can be done online at
www.brownfields2006.org.

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State to receive \$3.5 million over five years for environmental health tracking

DES and DHHS receive cooperative funding

A five-year, \$3.5 million cooperative agreement to track environmentally-related issues such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, cancer and birth outcomes has been awarded to DES and the NH Department of Health and Human Services from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. The first year award of \$663,121 will initiate five years of support for this developing system.

"These federal resources are helping state agencies build a strong foundation for environmental and public health tracking," said DES Commissioner Michael Nolin. "As an agency with a dual mission of environmental quality and public health protection, DES is very concerned about the impact that pollutants may have on the people of our state. Over time, this system will help to better determine which environmental factors play a key role in the development of illness and the protection of public health."

"Improved environmental health tracking will benefit state decision makers with better information, and local communities will benefit from more focused health and environmental data," said Mary Ann Cooney, state public health director. "When communities are better informed, they will be able to respond to environmental health concerns and protect public health. DES and DHHS look forward to working together on environmental health tracking efforts by sharing staff, resources and information."

This funding is part of \$22 million in competitive funds won by 17 states and cities as part of legislation approved by Congress in 2005 to support a national system for Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT). Regionally, EPHT partners will include UNH, US Geological Survey, Maine and New York. New Hampshire already monitors infectious and chronic diseases, but this will be the first effort to track multiple environmental health issues in the state over time. This second phase of funding is being awarded to address gaps in environmental health data sets, and standardize them so they can better track trends over time and by location.

For more information, please contact Sherry Godlewski, environmental health educator, Air Resources Division at (603) 271-6801 or sgodlewski@des.state.nh.us. ■

New state park opens at Jericho Lake

One of the largest all-terrain vehicle facilities in the country

New Hampshire officials recently announced the opening of a new state park in the city of Berlin. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on August 11, with the new facility aptly named the "State Park at Jericho Lake." Purchase of this large parcel of land was approved by the Governor and Executive Council in November 2005. It boasts 7,200 acres of woodlands, wetlands, log trails, and scenic mountain vistas in and around Jericho Lake. The goal is to create one of the premier recreational parks in the country through state-of-the-art engineering design, ongoing education for park patrons, and strict enforcement of park rules for the safety and enjoyment of the public.

In June 2006, the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development's Bureau of Trails sent out requests for bids for the development of a master trails plan (a legislative requirement), with responses received during July and August. Work on the trails plan began in September by compiling an inventory of existing trail corridors, preparing a timeline for trail construction, making projections relative to staffing levels and trail use fees needed to maintain the facility, and locating connector trails with existing off-site all-terrain vehicle trails. The final trails plan will address the full build-out of the park over the next ten years.

In addition to serving ATV riders, the facility will eventually provide the trails and supporting infrastructure to accommodate cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and other seasonal sports enthusiasts. The famous Hansen Ski Club will also relocate to the new park over the coming year.

DES is pleased to be serving on the State Park at Jericho Lake Advisory Committee, the group that will oversee the development and utilization of the new park. For more information about the new State Park at Jericho Lake, please go to www.nhparks.state.nh.us/ParksPages/BerlinProperty/BerlinProperty.html. ■



The ATV park trail head at Jericho Lake. Clear signage, including detailed maps (posted on left), speed limits, rules and directions, are posted throughout the trails.

Photo by Ernie Blais, Androscoggin Valley ATV Club, www.jericholakeatvpark.com

Pittsfield receives DES septage grant funds

Project increases state septage capacity

DES has awarded \$33,504 to the Town of Pittsfield for creating innovative alternative septage treatment. These funds represent the first monies from the newly-created state funded septage disposal grant program, referred to as the State Aid Grant Plus (SAG Plus). The award reimburses the town 50 percent of eligible costs incurred while conducting the pilot project. DES Commissioner Michael Nolin presented the grant to the town at a ceremony held at the Pittsfield Town Hall in August. This award ceremony was designed to recognize the leadership efforts of town officials and the importance of innovative and alternative technologies to increase the state's septage disposal capacity.

Pittsfield's two-year project, which involved a public/private partnership with Bill Gosse of Gosse Septic Service, resulted in the town's wastewater treatment plant being able to significantly increase its septage disposal capacity. During the 2003-2004 project, Pittsfield Water Pollution Control Facility processed more than 1.3 million gallons of raw septage. The project showed that the facility could support as much as 3 million gallons per year with strict control on filtrate quality. The full report can be found on the DES web site, through the permission of the Turner Group, TTG Environmental Consultants, at www.des.nh.gov/wwe/septslud/sep_pilot_rpt_TEC-2005.pdf. In the first full year of operation following the project, the Pittsfield facility received 2.8 million gallons of septage.

Increasing septage disposal capacity is important to the local residents and to the environment because it helps keep the costs associated with the proper maintenance of a septic system affordable. Approximately 80

out of state.

All New Hampshire municipalities have a statutory responsibility to provide or assure access to septage disposal for their residents. The SAG Plus was created through the efforts of the Septage Task Force and the New Hampshire

Legislature as a proactive method of creating much needed additional disposal capacity. DES is presently working with communities around the state to increase their septage capacity through the SAG Plus Program.

For more information about the award presentation or SAG Plus, please contact Ray Gordon, DES septage coordinator, at (603) 271-3571 or rgordon@des.state.nh.us. ■



Commissioner Nolin (right) presents a check to Pittsfield town officials, Arthur Morse and Ron Vein, for the town's innovative alternative septage treatment initiative.

percent of new development in the state relies on septic systems to treat sanitary wastes. Septic system failure poses a threat of contamination to the state's water resources and creates a public health problem. Additionally, this facility is important for New Hampshire because it expands our overall septage disposal capacity. Currently, New Hampshire has a deficit of septage disposal capacity as it sends 27 percent of septage generated



DES Air Resources Director Bob Scott introduces Gov. John Lynch before a gathering of state officials, media and visitors atop a foggy Pack Monadnock during the unveiling of the state's improved air quality monitoring station.

Rivers Management Advisory Committee recommends Ammonoosuc River for protection

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) unanimously recommended that the Ammonoosuc River be accepted into the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP). Committee representatives include recreation,



conservation, hydroelectric, agricultural, business and industry, municipal water and conservation commissions, fish

and game, and other interests.

The Rivers Management and Protection Act of 1988 (RSA 483) established the RMPP based on a two-tier approach to river management and protection: state designation of significant rivers and protection of instream values and local development and adoption of river corridor management plans to protect shorelines and adjacent lands. RSA 483 also established the RMAC, whose members represent a wide range of river interests and work closely with DES in an advisory capacity.

Prior to a public hearing in Littleton regarding the nomination, the RMAC met with the Ammonoosuc River Corridor Advisory Committee and the town of Littleton, sponsors of the nomination, to learn more about the river and discuss the nomination. A tour of river sites was also conducted.

"The Rivers Management Advisory Committee members really appreciated the opportunity to visit sites along the river and listen to each of the individuals who spoke at the hearing," said RMAC vice-chair, Michele Tremblay. "It's crucial for the committee to hear everyone's questions, concerns, and comments so that it can make the best possible recom-

mendation."

"The RMAC was very impressed with the level of public support demonstrated for the nomination at the public hearing," said Kenneth Kimball, RMAC chair. "Of the seven towns involved, letters of support were received from the elected officials from each one," he said. Approximately 30 people attended the public hearing. All who testified at the hearing supported designation of the Ammonoosuc River. Letters of endorsement were received from ten municipal boards and commissions, including all seven boards of selectmen. The proposed river segment classification designations also are appropriate based on the materials presented and the site review.



Supporters of the Ammonoosuc River's nomination into the Rivers Protection Program hope to display this sign in the near future.

For more information about the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program, contact Steve Couture, rivers coordinator, at (603) 271-8801, or www.des.nh.gov/Rivers. ■

Tanning bed lamps burned out? Recycle!

Fluorescent lamps contain mercury that when broken can be hazardous to human health and the environment. Under New Hampshire law, all tanning bed lamps are hazardous and must be recycled or disposed of as a hazardous waste.

Did you know ...

- Tanning bed lamps contain 40-80 mg of mercury; four times the amount of a typical overhead fluorescent lamp.
- A tanning bed contains between 45 to 90 lamps.
- Lamps are changed two or more times a year.
- New Hampshire has 254 licensed tanning salons.
- 40 percent of tanning salons contain five or more beds.



The potential emissions from mismanaged lamps are between five to 20 pounds of mercury a year. As little as one gram of mercury deposited from the atmosphere to a 20-acre lake each year can, over time, result in mercury-contaminated fish that are unsafe to consume on a regular basis.

For more information on tanning bed recycling, visit www.des.nh.gov/nhppp/Mercury/tan_bed_flier_NH.pdf. For information on the New Hampshire fish advisory, see www.des.nh.gov/pdf/Mercury_Fish.pdf. ■

People are reminded that exposure to ultraviolet radiation from tanning beds, similar to exposure from the sun, can have harmful effects. For more information on the health effects of ultraviolet radiation, contact Sherry Godlewski, DES environmental health educator, at (603) 271-6801 or sgodlewski@des.statate.nh.us.

NH team excels in North American Canon Envirothon

The NH Envirothon Team from Keene High School competed in the Canon Envirothon in Winnipeg, Manitoba this summer. The team, coached by teacher Cliff Lerner, qualified to compete in Manitoba by winning the NH Envirothon state competition held at Southern New Hampshire University in May. Team members include Chris Payson, Hannah LaFleur, Emily Gelb, Kate Fox, and Colin Nichols. With 52 states and provinces competing in the Canon Envirothon, New Hampshire placed twelfth, and finished in the top ten in four of the six scored categories. Their top score was fourth place in Soil Science. Top overall honors at the competition went to the team from Virginia, with Pennsylvania second, and Texas third.

Each year, DES staff assists with the state competition and are duly proud of the New Hampshire team's efforts displayed at the international competition. DES staff who provided help with this year's state competition include Alicia Carlson, Tim Drew, Jen Drociak, Barbara Fales, Ken Kettenring, John Liptak and Barbara McMillan. The NH Association of Conservation Districts administers the NH Envirothon.

The 52 teams in Manitoba were tested on a host of natural resource issues, including soils, water, forestry, wildlife, and climate, as well as their ability to clearly present information in oral presentations. Teamwork and problem solving challenges on real-life environmental issues are also evaluated.

For further information, contact Herb Vadney, Envirothon coordinator, at (603) 279-1141 or Vadney@metrocast.net. Additional information about the Canon Envirothon can be found at www.envirothon.org/media/top_honors_2006.php. ■

Vehicle recyclers recognized for their environmental achievements

DES recently recognized Hopi Corporation of Belmont and Dave's Automotive Enterprises of Marlborough for becoming Certified N.H. Green Yards, a distinction reserved for auto salvage yards that use exemplary environmental work practices. The process for becoming a "Certified N.H. Green Yard" is part of a pilot program developed by DES, working with the N.H. Auto & Truck Recyclers Association, to improve environmental performance at auto salvage yards and provide incentive for going beyond compliance.

"Modern automobiles contain many hazardous materials and components such as gasoline, oil, antifreeze, mercury switches and lead acid batteries," noted Assistant Commissioner Mike Walls. "We depend on auto recyclers to properly recover these materials and keep them from contaminating the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the land we live on. Too often we hear about environmental problems caused by one 'junkyard' or another. In fact, some of these 17 Certified N.H. Green Yards have encountered problems caused by mistakes in the past. But they made important changes to correct the mistakes and now use best management practices to run environmentally responsible facilities."

For more information and to find out about becoming a Certified N.H. Green Yard, contact Pamela H. Sprague, N.H. Green Yard Program coordinator, at (603) 271-2938 or psprague@des.state.nh.us, or visit the DES website www.des.nh.gov/SW/GreenYards. ■

At the movies ...

Roger Ebert says of it: "...fascinating and relentless." *E!*

Online says, "Taut, intelligent and blackly humorous, the film is powerful cinematic activism."

A movie review in *Environmental News*? Yes! If it stars the Environment.

The Editorial Board agreed that *An Inconvenient Truth* deserved two thumbs up and a mention in this issue.

Davis Guggenheim's *An Inconvenient Truth*, which opened in theaters this summer, follows Al Gore as he travels across the country to lecture on the environment and man's impact on the planet. Says Ali Naderzad covering the Cannes Film Festival, "The images and graphs parading about the screen are shocking; figures like the rate at which species are going extinct or how fast the polar ice cap is melting are stark reminders of the consequences of man's self-destructiveness. The message of *An Inconvenient Truth* is clear: the environment, contaminated by man's hand, is quickly spinning out of control and we can already see the consequences."

But, as Naderzad reminds us, the movie does not just deliver a message of doom—there's also the message of hope: "We can fix this if every one of us makes small changes in our own lifestyles."

Whatever your political persuasion, the movie deserves consideration for its accurate and graphic depiction of the global climate change issue. We urge you to see it and decide for yourself.

For more reviews of this movie, please go to <http://movies.yahoo.com/movie/1809257809/critic>. ■



Compost fall leaves for a healthier lawn & garden

This fall, instead of bagging leaves and putting them out on the curb or hauling them away, why not try composting? Composting is a natural process of decomposition of organic material into a rich soil amendment. Starting to compost is a great way to take advantage of a valuable resource falling right in your yard while creating a healthier lawn and garden.

One of the greatest benefits of composting is the finished compost! It can save you money by reducing the amount of water and fertilizer your garden or lawn needs to stay healthy and by providing a mulch at no cost. Compost adds organic matter and nutrients to your soil, reduces soil erosion and promotes healthy root development in plants and trees. When mixed with compost, clay soils are lightened, and sandy soils retain water better. It can be used as a mulch or top dressing, or it can be incorporated into your soil for gardens, lawns or tree plantings. For established lawns and gardens, spread about 2" of compost over your entire garden annually and work into the soil. For the beginning lawn or garden, there is no substitute for tilling in 3" of compost 9" deep. You should see the difference the very first year with less watering and greener grass.

Composting in your backyard is easy. Your compost pile can be as simple as a heap of materials in a corner of your yard, or a bin to localize the pile and help maximize the composting process. Composting systems or bins can be constructed at home or purchased commercially at local hardware and garden supply stores or through community-based compost bin sales. A bin or pile of compost material four feet wide by four feet high by at least four feet



long works well for getting started. Homemade bins can be made from chicken

wire, snow fencing, cinder blocks, old wooden pallets, or other material with holes in the sides to allow air for the composting organisms to breathe.

Composting can take anywhere from a few months to more than a year depending upon the organic materials that you add and the conditions present. It can take place with little time or effort. But the composting process can also be hastened by: chopping or shredding organic materials; mixing about one-third high-nitrogen materials (grass clippings, green plant material, manures or food wastes) with about two-thirds high-carbon materials (leaves, wood chips, shavings, straw or hay); and maintaining proper moisture (keep your pile as damp as a wrung-out sponge). You can turn the pile to provide aeration by moving the outside materials to the inside

once a month to speed things up or once or twice a year if you are in no rush for the finished compost.

Composting fall leaves helps to curtail pollution from over fertilization, con-

serves water by improving your lawn and garden soils, and reduces the

amount of waste going to landfills and incinerators. It's a great way to contribute to a cleaner environment and save money. For more information on lawn care and composting or to request composting publications, contact UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home and Garden Education Center info-line toll-free at 1-877-398-4769 or visit <http://ceinfo.unh.edu/home.html>. For more information about composting, contact the New Hampshire Compost Association at (603) 271-2591, www.nhcompost.com/ or the NH Department of Environmental Services at (603) 271-2975; or see www.des.nh.gov/swtas/pdf/compostFlier.pdf. ■

Grant funding opportunity

The State Conservation Committee announced that it is seeking grant applications from towns, cities, nonprofits and other organizations engaged in natural resource conservation projects. Approximately \$200,000 is available for the 2007 grant round.

Each time a person purchases or renews his or her car registration with a moose plate, a portion of the registration fee goes to the State Conservation Committee for its Moose Plate Grant Program. The grant program is open to county conservation districts, cooperative extension natural resource programs, municipal conservation agencies, schools, scout groups, and other nonprofit entities engaged in natural resource conservation programs.

Applications are due no later than November 17, 2006. For further information, including the application, go to www.mooseplate.com/grants/sccgrant/NHSCCgrant.html. ■



Governor

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facility to fuel their vehicles. The use of biodiesel, a cleaner-burning, domestically produced, renewable fuel, in the state DOT and UNH fleets is another step in the process of meeting the goals of my Executive Order and increasing our energy independence.

Biodiesel is a diesel fuel processed from vegetable oils, recycled food-grade oils, or animal fats. It is typically



Gov. Lynch, Becky Ohler of DES, and Ed Burke, fuel company president.

blended with petroleum diesel, with the most common blend being 20 percent biodiesel (B20). Biodiesel is non-toxic, biodegradable, and reduces many air pollutants, including particulate matter, hydrocarbons, air toxics and others. It also reduces the

amount of greenhouse gases that are emitted into the atmosphere with the burning of fossil fuels. To highlight the immense importance of this new B20 pump, consider the fact that along with the benefits of decreasing our dependence on foreign oil, the minute the state of New Hampshire begins putting B20 biodiesel blend into our vehicles' tanks we reduce the petroleum use of each vehicle by 20 percent. We also reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of that vehicle by 16 percent; the sulfur emissions that cause acid rain by 20

percent; and toxic compound emissions by up to 50 percent.

Five years ago there were no public or private biodiesel fueling stations in New Hampshire. Since then, 10 retail outlets for biodiesel have opened in the state and several private tanks hold biodiesel blends. Now, the first state-owned biodiesel fueling facility has opened. New Hampshire can and should be a leader in protecting our environment by beginning to switch to renewable, lower emission, alternative fuels. The opening of the new biodiesel facility is just one more example of our commitment to this goal.

John Lynch
Governor



Gov. Lynch refuels a DOT truck with biodiesel at a recent press event showcasing the new fueling station in Durham.



New biodiesel pump in Durham.



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